

# Education

by Jim Robson

**Reading,  
Writing,  
Arithmetic,  
and Jobs**



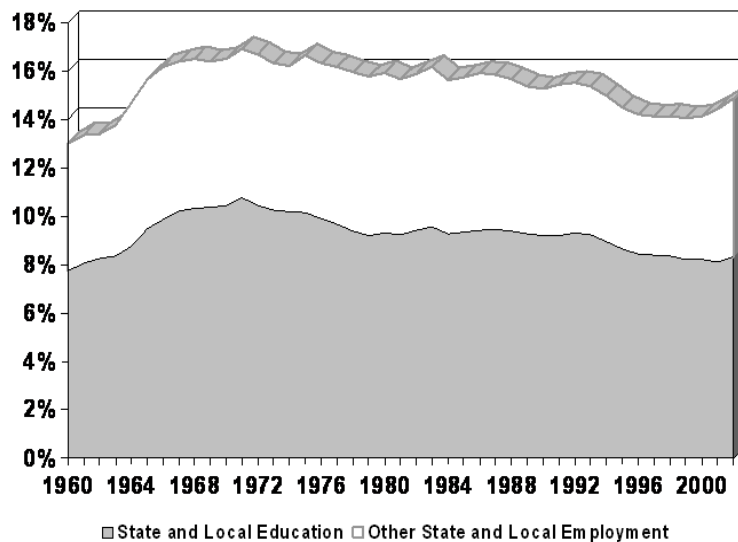
In comparison to other states in the country, Utah has an abundance of young people. One of the enduring characteristics of Utah's population is a higher than average fertility rate. For every 1,000 Utah women between the ages of 15 to 44 there were 94.5 births in 2000. The national average of 67.5 is 40 percent less than Utah. The state with the second highest rate is Arizona at 84.4 births per 1,000 women of "child bearing age."

## **We're Unique**

Consistently higher rates of birth make Utah demographically unique among the states. Information on the distribution of the population by age from the 2000 Census shows just how different Utah is. One-half of the population in Utah is 27.1 years of age or younger. This is the median age, or the age that divides the population into two parts. The second youngest state is Texas with a median age of 32.3, while 36.1 is the median age for the country as a whole.

The large number of kids and young adults has a profound effect on Utah in terms of the demand for education services. Clearly Utah ranks number one in the country relative to the educational needs of its citizens. About 37 percent of Utah's population is between the ages 5 and 24. There are about 510,000 children in the elementary and secondary school ages of 5 and 17. In addition, Utah has about 310,000 young adults between the ages of 18 to 24 who are in the prime ages for post-secondary technical, college, and university education. Having the highest proportion of its population in need of educa-

## State and Local Government Jobs as a percent of Total Employment



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.

tion and skill development has consistently presented Utahns with difficult funding challenges.

### Government's There

A large proportion of the educational needs are met by state and local governments. It is no surprise that 56 percent of the jobs in state and local government are in education. Most of these jobs are found in the 40 local school districts—which provide public education (grades K through 12) and 10 higher education institutions (Utah's system of colleges and universities). There are a total of 89,254 state and local education jobs in Utah, or 8.3 percent of all nonfarm payroll jobs.

Private education workers account for another 2.4 percent of Utah jobs, or 25,370. Private colleges and universities employ about 70 percent of the private education workers.

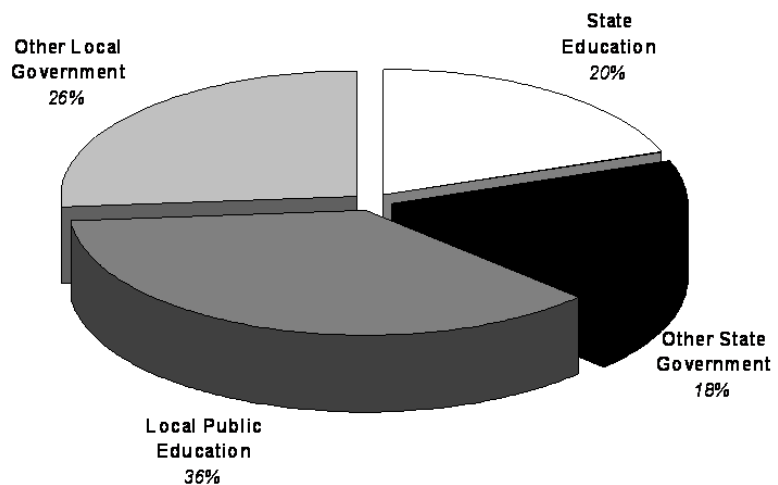
In 2002, Utah nonfarm payroll wages totaled \$32.3 billion. Total wages paid for education, both publicly funded and private, were almost \$3.0 billion, or 9.2 percent of the Utah total. State and local government education wages were \$2.4 billion, and private education wages were \$561 million.

### Growing Up

The Utah "education industry" is large and growing, providing 10.7 percent of the jobs and 9.2 percent of the wages. The output from the education industry, the skills and abilities acquired by Utahns, are inputs

into all other economic activity in the state. Acquiring marketable skills and high levels of education, as a society, is critical to the continued economic success of Utah in this era of globalization.

## Utah 2002 State and Local Government Jobs by Category



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.